

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:
plural image forming units which form visible images of different colors by making developers of different colors adhere to image holders electrostatically[[,]];
a belt transfer member which lies in contact with image holders for the different colors to transfer the developers adhering to the image holders of the image forming units thereto and make the transferred images overlap each other; and
intermediate transfer electrode members, located opposite to the image holders of the image forming units with the belt transfer member between the electrode members and the ~~carriers~~ image holders, to which transfer voltage is applied to transfer images electrostatically from the image forming units to the belt transfer member in sequence and make the transferred images overlap each other,
wherein each of the plural intermediate transfer electrode members is located on a belt surface away from a point at which a corresponding image holder contacts the belt.

2. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the plural intermediate transfer electrode members are located on the belt transfer member downstream from the points at which the image holders contact the belt.

3. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the most upstream intermediate transfer electrode member is located upstream from the point at which the most upstream image holder contacts the belt, and the most downstream intermediate transfer electrode member is located downstream from the point at which the most downstream image holder contacts the belt.

4. (currently amended): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a medium transfer electrode member which applies transfer voltage to the belt transfer member in order to transfer overlapping, transferred visible images to a recording medium such as paper at a time;

a backup roller which is located opposite to the medium transfer electrode member with the belt transfer member between them;

a tension roller which is located between ~~the~~ a drive roller and the backup roller to apply tension to the belt transfer member; and

an electrical isolation structure which electrically isolates the intermediate transfer electrode members and the image holders, which are in contact with the belt transfer member, from the medium transfer electrode member.

5. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein in the electrical isolation structure, the drive roller and the backup roller are electrically floating, the tension roller is electrically grounded, and there is an electrically grounded grounding roller opposite to a cleaning member located between the backup roller and an adjacent image holder with the belt transfer member between the cleaning member and the grounding roller.

6. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein the tension roller is almost at the midpoint between the drive roller and the backup roller.

7. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the following relation exists between a number m of the image holders and a number n of the intermediate transfer electrode members: $n < m$, and $n \geq 1$.

8. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a surface resistance of the belt transfer member is in a range from $5 \times 10^8 \Omega/\square$ to $5 \times 10^{10} \Omega/\square$.

9. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediate transfer electrode member is made of metal.

10. (original): The image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediate transfer electrode member is a metal roller, a metal brush, a metal sheet, a metal shaft, a metal block, a metal plate or a metal blade.

11. (currently amended): An imaging method comprising:
an image forming step of forming visible images of different colors by making developers of different colors adhere to image holders electrostatically; and
an intermediate transfer step of sequentially transferring the different color images adhering to the plural image holders onto a belt transfer member electrostatically and making the transferred images overlap each other,
wherein, at the intermediate transfer step, transfer voltage is applied on a belt surface at places away from points at which the image holders contact the belt.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1-4. These sheets replace the original sheets. In Figs. 1-4, "Prior Art" has been added.

Attachments: Replacement Sheets – Figs. 1-4